

*Speed Date* – A Radio Play

**An Honors Thesis (Honors 499)**

**by**

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**Thesis Advisor**

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A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'TS', is written over a horizontal line.

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## **Abstract**

As a journalism/telecommunications and theatrical studies major, I have had a hard time bringing the two majors together. The two areas do have one thing in common: storytelling, just conducted in different ways. This inspired the pursuit of medium I have long been fascinated with but has fallen out of popular knowledge: the radio play. The idea of producing an original work for radio broadcast was an exciting one, a way of honoring the days of *Superman* and *The War of the Worlds*. This led to the production of Justin Pierce's *Speed Date*, a play that follows two waiters working at a café during a speed dating event, and exploring the relationship that develops between them. The project allowed for research into the history of radio, and analysis and development of the production itself. The project culminated with a live broadcast of the show on WCRD 91.3 FM on April 13, 2014.

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## **Acknowledgements**

I would like to thank Dr. Tyler Smith, for his support and hard work advising me throughout this project. His advice and guidance allowed the project to develop into the great project it became.

I would also like to thank the writer of the play, Justin Pierce, and the sound designer for the project, Brandon Reed. Their hard work and talent shines throughout the show.

Thanks is also owed to the performers for their hard work and amazing talent: Sarah Paradise, Justin Pierce, Molly Wagner Sara Dreibelbis, Daniel Gibson, Talley Gale, Ben Linser, Jillian Leff, Anthony Majewski, Jordan Bennett-Barnes, Bob Prescott, and Rachel Crawley.

Finally, thank you to my Mom and Dad, for supporting and loving a son as he pursued such different degrees and various other exploits in the bizarre manner only they could understand and support.

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# **Project Summary**



A.J. Brammer

Dr. Tyler Smith

Honors 499 – *Speed Date*

1 May 2014

*Speed Date: A Summary of a Strange and Wonderful Project*

This project started off as joke. A joke that was made around 4 in the morning following video games and a drive to James Dean's grave.

"We do not eat brains because it is easy! We eat brains because it is hard!"

That statement may seem like a bizarre statement. That's because it is. It is even more bizarre when you read it in the voice of John F. Kennedy.

My friend Jack and I pondered what JFK would do if we came back to life in, of all things, the zombie apocalypse. What would he think of the current nature of the world? How would the man that's work led to many of the major developments of the Civil Rights Movement handle the prejudices against zombies in this new world? How could a man who embodied the ideals of the 1960s translate into the 2010s? With that, *Zombie F. Kennedy*, or as we affectionately nicknamed it *ZFK*, was born. For the next couple of months, Jack and I would joke about plot developments in the story, but nothing serious developed.

Fast forward to the spring of 2014. Summer is rapidly approaching, and I am attempting to find a thesis project to do during my senior year. I attended a seminar regarding thesis projects, during which they recommended we pursue something we are familiar with and passionate about; a capstone to what you've done as a major. I have been fortunate enough to complete a triple major at Ball State, majoring in journalism

and telecommunications (in a joint degree) and theatrical studies. The journalism and theatre worlds, however, have very different approaches to how they approach work. The expectations are different. I was also fortunate enough to stay involved with the campus radio station WCRD 91.3 FM throughout my time here, hosting a radio show weekly for four years. This led to a fun idea: a radio play. I could take the storytelling aspect of theatre and merge it with the mediums I have focused on through journalism and telecommunications. The idea was too fun to pass up.

The next step was to find a story to use. Not having any experience in playwriting, and not really having the means of acquiring rights to an established work, commissioning another writer seemed like the right idea. This led to a moment of bizarre inspiration: why not do *ZFK*? It would allow Jack and I to collaborate in a way we had always talked of but never had the opportunity, and we could produce a fun story in a style only the two of us could pull off. With encouragement from a couple of fronts (including a former sound design professor of mine and an ex-girlfriend), the idea was set. I approached Dr. Smith to be my advisor, he accepted, and thus *ZFK* was born.

Fast-forward to January of 2014. I'm at an interesting place. The fall semester had been a bit of an emotional roller coaster for various reasons, and the looming prospect of the "real world" was growing larger as graduation approached. More bothersome was the fact that I had not seen the script for *ZFK*, something I should have received at Christmas. I'm not sure I will totally know the circumstances that led to the death of the *ZFK* project. Life has a way of getting in the way, so ultimately I had to accept the this project, at least for now, would not be coming to light. I also had to tell Dr. Smith that going into my final semester I had nothing to show him for my thesis project. I owe Dr. Smith a lot

more credit than I could ever offer him; without his guidance and cool resolve in the situation, nobody freaked out and the idea of a radio play continued. I was encouraged to find another play and playwright, preferably fast.

Around that time, something remarkable happened; I decided to retake an Honors Biology course in order to boost my GPA into cum laude territory. Enter Sarah Paradise. Sarah and I had known each other since freshman year within the theatre department, but I did not really get to know her well until senior year. To put a long story short, this is a story of boy meets girl. Dating a girl who is friends with many playwrights really pays off when you need a script. This led me to Justin Pierce, who had written work called *Speed Date*. One read through the script and I knew I had a winner.

It is much easier to do radio play in a short time when you are working with talented people, and the people I ultimately brought together for *Speed Date* are among the best that I know. Brandon Reed and I first met on my first day of college classes, and a friendship rapidly developed. There was only one choice in mind when it came to finding a sound designer, and I'm lucky that Brandon wanted to be a part of the show. Justin was also incredibly easy to work with; he adapted the script to a radio format and was a guiding force behind the show. Casting the play also became an easy task; Sarah ultimately brought to the project herself (Miranda), Molly Wagner (Jordan), Jillian Leff (Missy), Anthony Majewski (Jared), Daniel Gibson (Josh), and Bob Prescott (Mike). All of them have various levels of acting experience, and all except Anthony had worked on projects with the script before. When another casting choice fell through, it seemed like a natural fit to have Justin play a part in his own work, portraying the male lead in Jack. I was able to fill the other four roles through various friends I have made over the years:

Jordan Bennett-Barnes (Jacob), Sara Dreibelbis (Mary), Ben Linser (Jeff), and Talley Gale (Madison). A friend of mine from high school, Rachel Crawley, joined the project as an understudy, and became the “voice” of *Speed Date* when she lent her talents to our radio spot and segues in the show.

Working with this cast was an easy task; we met for read-throughs and rehearsals, they took direction well, and they each brought a fantastic product to the table. Brandon’s sound design created the world of the play flawlessly; much of the praise our production received involved his work. The show ran live on WCRD 91.3 FM on April 13, 2014, to an audience that I cannot get the official numbers on, but based on the calls and messages I received it was the most listened-to effort I ever contributed to radio at Ball State. The show ran without a hitch, and I am proud of our efforts creating the show.

This project was made possible through the hard work of many people. Regarding the show itself, I will forever owe my gratitude to Justin, Brandon, Sarah, Molly, Sara, Daniel, Ben, Talley, Jillian, Anthony, Bob, Jordan, and Rachel. Their efforts made the show the success it was. Many also deserve mention for the roles they played in inspiring me to get the project off the ground, including Joe Court, Tyler Bell, Alec Ribblett, Hannah Combs, and Jack Colón. I also have to thank my Mom and Dad. Without their support of a son that wanted to pursue degrees that required lot of hard work, many sleepless nights, 180+ credit hours, and various projects, along with their willingness to help out whenever they can, I would not be who I am today. Finally, a tremendous thanks is owed to Dr. Smith. His guidance pushed this project to new heights, and his willingness to work with me is something I will always appreciate. *Speed Date* was, simply put, a marvelous project. These people made that possible.

# **Director's Statement**

A.J. Brammer

Dr. Tyler Smith

Honors 499 – *Speed Date*

1 May 2014

*Speed Date* – Director's Statement

It might be cliché to say “this is a play about love.” With a play like *Speed Date*, however, we are dealing with that exactly: love, and the various forms it can come in. We meet a lot of people as we go about life, and we form many different kinds of relationships. Those initial connections we make can come from the slightest of moments; it is the little things that can sometimes make the biggest impact. We may not frequently meet people speed dating at cafés, but *Speed Date* looks at the kinds of love we form with people and the little moments that create those relationships.

Justin Pierce, the writer of *Speed Date*, described the basic plot of the play as being about the two waiters: Jack and Miranda. As we see their relationship develop, we have four dates that interject them, with each one identifying a different kind of love. We will see throughout the course of the play, through these four dates, what kind of love will develop between the two characters. I think an audience can see something in all of these scenes and find something they identify with. We have two people in need of a friend, two people looking to find themselves, a couple who find their relationship strained, and two people who see something of themselves in the other. With these scenes setting the standard for Jack and Miranda, we see the two of them make a connection and something grow from that. It might be up for the audience to decide which of the dates

best exemplifies their relationship. With a play that I think anybody can identify with, I think that's how it should be.

I tend to meet people and make friends very quickly. We sit next to each other on the bus, we get paired on a group project, or we are both looking at the same movie in the video store. These little moments sometimes grow into beautiful friendships, and sometimes those moments lead to something more. *Speed Date* looks at those little moments and how they are important. Jack and Miranda initially meet one another when Miranda is struggling to hang a banner, and they learn each other's names when their nametags are dropped. This slight act of kindness opens the door for more to develop. The little moments with the other daters are also significant; Jeff and Miranda ultimately bond through a passing comment about Jeff's mother. It seems trivial at the time, but as the scene develops we see the depths of these characters and their shared connection. Little moments go a long way, and *Speed Date* captures that.

In conclusion, *Speed Date* is a play about love and little moments, something many can take away from. We see the dates exemplify different kinds of love, and these scenes reflect upon the kind of love that will develop between our protagonists. We see the little moments between the characters that open the door for bigger connections. This play is indeed a play about love, an embodiment of a cliché. On a topic we are all familiar on, however, sometimes a cliché is the perfect descriptor.

# **Character and Scene Analysis**



A.J. Brammer

Dr. Tyler Smith

Honors 499 – *Speed Date*

25 April 2014

### Character/Scene Analysis

#### **Jack**

Jack, as stated in the playwright's notes, is shy and quirky but has the ability to be chill and suave. Jack and Miranda share the focus of the story, as ultimately the play is exploring what kind of relationship they will develop. Jack has many of the makings of the typical guy in a "guy meets girl" story. Jack is looking for somebody to identify with in the café. He is surrounded by people he feels do not understand him, and having been in the city for a while he fears continuing to feel the loneliness he is stuck in. When initially meeting Miranda, he may just be looking for a friend, but after sensing something more the objective for Jack becomes to go on a date with Miranda. This may seem like a trivial goal, but in a play that focuses not only on love but also on the little things, it's a fitting scenario. The little things factor into the means for Jack; by looking for small connections with Miranda, he hopes to find the opportunity for something more. Having been stuck in this place for so long and finally seeing something worth sticking around for in Miranda, not connecting with Miranda might force Jack into reevaluating where he is at in life.

#### **Miranda**

Miranda is something of an "in" character; because she is the new girl at the café her arrival and first meeting with Jack give the story its ultimate plot. The playwright

describes the character as being nervous, innocent, sweet, and a little bit lost. The initial meeting with Jack may not initially be romantic for Miranda, as she is looking for somebody to connect with in an environment she is not ultimately familiar with. Later on, perhaps through Jack's means, the sparks of attraction for Miranda can be seen. The objective for Miranda is to find somebody to help her in her new situation, but a dual objective of pursuing something romantic with Jack develops when he asks her out. Miranda says in the play that she is uncomfortable in new situations, so the stakes for Miranda seem higher than Jack. Should Miranda not be able to make this connection, she is left alone in the unfamiliar café, a situation she hopes to avoid. The means for Miranda are similar to Jack's in that the focus is on the little things, looking for an initial in to develop something more. Miranda's means are less pronounced than Jack's due to her more nervous and unfamiliar state.

## **Josh**

Josh is working through a recent heartbreak and is trying to force himself to move on, even if he is not quite ready. When Josh first approaches Mary it is to pursue something romantic, but when Mary brings up his ex-girlfriend the situation changes as he is forced to confront his lingering feelings. The playwright describes Josh as introspective and broken, characteristics reflected in his comments on his failed relationship. The objective for Josh is to approach a girl and score a date in order to prove that he has moved on from his ex. Josh's situation shifts, however, when Mary brings up Josh's ex: the goal is now to prove to one of her friends that Josh has moved on. Josh's means are straightforward – he bought the girl a drink, he'll chat her up for a bit, then attempt to get her number. The stakes for Josh are high; his self-esteem isn't in the best

place, so for a guy that probably hasn't approached a girl in a while striking out with this girl will force him into further social withdrawal. The scene ultimately ends positively for Josh, as he finds an opportunity to work through his feelings by talking to Mary.

## **Mary**

The playwright describes Mary as enthusiastic, and says she takes no nonsense. This seems like a fitting descriptor for somebody that punched a guy for lying about the Alamo. Mary states that she is here because she is scared of being alone. Even though she seems to say it in a half-joking manner, it still has some truth to it. Mary might not have much luck meeting others because of her nature. Therefore, the objective for Mary as she approaches this scene is to find somebody at the speed-dating event in order to avoid being alone.. Her means are traditional in the sense that she'll go and meet new people and find somebody she likes, but her standards are probably higher than the average dater. Mary also hides behind her humor; she may appear to be joking, but in reality seeing her friends around her find romantic interests she feels she needs to pick up the pace and find somebody or risk being left behind. Mary's stakes are the possibility of being alone and not finding anybody; for a girl that has formed ideas that commitment is a key part of life, the self-esteem blow of not finding anybody will force Mary further into her shell.. The scene changes as Mary decides to help Josh work out his issues.

## **Jeff**

Jeff is in a more controlled state when we first meet him. He is approaching the date in a cool and reserved manner. Jeff is looking to find somebody he can identify with at the speed-dating event; essentially, he's a traditional dater, but he has standards. Based on what he reveals during the scene, his relationship with his mom was an important one

to him. Therefore, Jeff's objective is to find a girl who his mom would approve of, a tall order for somebody who holds the memory of his mom in high regard. His means are standard – meet the right girl and win her over. Jeff's approach to this is a bit more refined than just a boy asking a girl out, as you can tell he is coming from a bit of experience and has an ideal person in mind. The stakes seem lower for Jeff, as the worst thing that can happen is he doesn't meet anybody this time and tries again (he mentions this isn't his first time at something like this). Yet he obviously is trying to find somebody, otherwise he would not keep retuning to the events.

### **Madison**

Madison's basic objectives are similar to Jeff's in the sense that this isn't her first time at a speed-dating event and she is looking for somebody to get to know better. She does, however, look for more in her endeavors, as she is more inquisitive about Jeff's past than the other daters tend to be. The underlying objective for Madison is to come to terms with her birth parent's abandonment of her as an infant, and to realize that her situation is not her own fault. Madison comes into the situation expecting another typical date, but a spark is seen when Jeff mentions his mother. Madison needs to find somebody that can understand her situation, but can also help her work through it and is willing to stick around. Jeff is that kind of person based on the story of his mom; he had the relationship Madison always wanted, but treasured it in a way she admires. Madison's means, as a dater, are standard to the situation, but she is looking at things from a wider perspective. The stakes for Madison are that if she does not find somebody today she can always come back and try again, but the stakes become higher for her when she reveals her past. Having put herself in a vulnerable position, Madison needs to be successful.

## **Jared**

Jared is comfortable in his current position, but this has made him a little oblivious to the feelings of those around him. Underscoring the start of the scene is that Jared is not totally comfortable with his situation with Missy, but he does not have it in him to confront her with his concerns. Jared's objective as he enters the scene is to bring up his concerns with Missy. Through his means, Jared does not want to disrupt the status quo or upset Missy, so he will try and bring it up in a subdued manner. The stakes are relatively high for Jared, as he does care about Missy and could potentially lose her should things not go as planned. Of all the characters in the play, Jared may be the most static, as he is so unwilling to change his circumstances directly.

## **Missy**

Missy is described in the playwright's notes as being aware, hurt, and jaded. She wants more out of her relationship with Jared, and wants him to want more out of it as well. Missy wants to avoid the complacency that Jared seems to be comfortable with. Missy's objective is to get Jared to try something new in order to put new life into their relationship, with her underlying objective being to confirm Jared's commitment. Missy goes about her means in the scene by confronting Jared directly on his lack of action, and by pushing him out of his comfort zone she hopes to access the truth more easily. The stakes for Missy are high, as she does not want to end up like her parents but cares about Jared. Should this conversation not go the way she hopes, she'll be left to heavily reevaluate her relationship and place with Jared.

## **Jacob**

Jacob is the most confident out of the 11 characters, and he has the biggest personality. He is comfortable in just about any situation, probably because he's been through many of them already. Jacob is hoping to find somebody who can help him be a better person. Jacob has done speed dating before, so his objective is to find somebody above the ordinary crowd that is interesting and has potential for something more. Jacob's task is more daunting than he is willing to admit as he has obviously been searching for a while. Jacob's means are more relaxed but at the same time more refined. He will cut through a situation quickly to see if there is potential or not. Through this, the situation with Mike becomes more intriguing; in addition to something romantic, Jacob sees the opportunity to help Mike in a way that nobody was able to help Jacob previously. The stakes for Jacob appear to be lower initially, as he can always just try again next week, but considering the way Jacob talks about himself he needs to find somebody that makes him want to help himself soon or he may be left wandering.

## **Mike**

Mike is attempting to branch out but does not know how to do so. The script heavily implies that Mike has recently come out of the closet, so the scenario for him is a much more stressful and complicated one. Mike comes into the scene not necessarily wanting to be noticed – he doesn't really know what he is looking for besides somebody to accept him because he has not been in this place before. Mike's objective is to force himself to deal with coming out and prove to himself he can handle the situation. He needs to find somebody that can understand his situation, but when he himself does not entirely understand his situation the task of finding somebody is challenging. His means are complicated, in that he has gone to the event in order to see what it is like but is not

really set on meeting somebody. Having already been brought out of his comfort zone, attempting to meet somebody is a tall order. The stakes for Mike are something of a now or never scenario: if Mike does not find to gain confidence in himself now it will only get worse. Mike needs help in coming into his own.

### **Jordan**

Jordan's character is largely here to serve the plot. She begins and ends the speed dating, as well as provides an opportunity for an intermission. Her exchanges with Jack also further establish the restaurant scene of the play. In terms of her own character, Jordan's objective is to prove to others that she can successfully lead the restaurant. Her means of doing this are through her creative energies and motivational attempts. Jordan's stakes are potentially high, as a successful speed-dating event could bring more business into her restaurant, and vindicate her in light of comments made by Jack doubting her.

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### **Act I, Scene 1:**

The play opens with Jack and Miranda first meeting when Jack helps Miranda hang up a banner at the restaurant. They exchange small talk and both appear to share an initial interest with one another. This scene gives the story some exposition, as well as the inciting incident to the story (although we do not officially know outside of the title yet that the speed dates will be occurring, since this is when Jack and Miranda first have their spark it is the inciting incident to the main plot). The scene also reinforces the idea that the little things go a long way – simply helping somebody hang a banner could be the start of something more.

### **Act I, Scene 2:**

This scene introduces us to the speed dating scenarios that will flow throughout the rest of the play. Jordan's monologue also provides some background information to the scene. In terms of the practical structure of the play, we need this scene in order to start the speed dates, as well as give context to what is to follow.

### **Act I, Scene 3:**

The first scene is between Mary and Josh. Josh enters the scene seemingly trying to initiate something with Mary, but is deterred when Mary immediately connects him to his ex-girlfriend. I believe this date is symbolic not only of the kind of love that exists between friends, but also of the repercussions of love. In a play full of happy moments, Josh's story is a sad one, and serves as a reminder that things don't always have a storybook ending. The scene fits the rest of the story well as it also shows that love doesn't always have to be romantic – Mary is willing to help Josh because she cares, not necessarily because she wants a relationship.

### **Act I, Scene 4:**

This scene furthers the initial connection between Miranda and Jack, and the playfulness of their interactions reflects the preceding scene. We don't yet know what Jack and Miranda's relationship will turn out to be, but the stage is being set for them to develop it into something.

### **Act I, Scene 5:**

The interaction between Madison and Jeff reflects upon a love that is built upon looking for what you don't have. Jeff and Madison have their parental situation in common, but their spark is seen when Madison wants to learn more about Jeff's situation. The phrase "she's my other half" is a cliché, but in this play that's what we're looking



for. This scene further services the story as another potential type of love for Jack and Miranda.

### **Act I, Scene 6:**

We check back in on Jack and Miranda, and a further connection is made between the two. The shared interests but different backgrounds reflect upon ideas established by the previous two dates. Jack's first attempt at asking Miranda out, which she rejects, gives the play a plot complication, while also foreshadowing some of the uneasy dates still to follow.

### **Act I, Scene 7 and Act II, Scene 1**

These two scenes with Jordan do not have much bearing on the overall message and story, but give the play an in and out for the intermission. We also get some comic relief from Jordan.

### **Act II, Scene 2**

Missy and Jared's scene shows that love is not always meant to last. It does, however, show that love that extends past the early phases requires work and care. The complacency that Jared falls into does not reflect well upon the other characters, who are willing to keep growing and try new things. The scene services the story by once again providing a potential relationship of Jack and Miranda.

### **Act II, Scene 3**

This is a short scene that extends from the previous complication between Jack and Miranda, while also reflecting upon the previous scene. It sets the stage for their final encounter after the last date.

### **Act II, Scene 4**

Mike and Jacob reflect the kind of love that is found in familiarity. Mike is seeking somebody that can understand him, and can help him improve himself. Jacob has been seeking the same thing, and the spark between the two characters is seen. The scene serves the overall story by bringing the mood back up – the audience can be hopeful going into the final scene with Jack and Miranda. In a play that likes its happy endings, this is necessary.

### **Act II, Scene 5**

We have one final scene of Jordan, in which she closes out the speed-dating event. With the dates serving as potential templates for Jack and Miranda, and the dates over, we can now go see what will happen between the two characters.

### **Act II, Scene 6**

This final scene gives the plot a crisis, climax, and falling action/resolution. The two characters are moments from going their separate ways and ignoring the feelings on the table, but Miranda tells Jack she was lying about having a boyfriend because she was scared. This reflects the way other daters lacked confidence, but her connection with Jack makes her want to better herself. Jack asks her out again, to which Miranda agrees. The question of what kind of relationship they will ultimately have is left open-ended, but we leave them knowing that they will attempt something romantic as Miranda calls it a date. The two are together as the play reaches its conclusion.

# Research

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Dr. Tyler Smith

Honors 499 – *Speed Date*

25 April 2014

### A History of Radio and Radio Performance

Radio finds its origins in the early research or wireless communication, as scientists looked to develop a “wireless telegraphy.” This initial research, dating from the mid eighteenth century, was essentially looking for a way to send Morse code messages over the air rather than through telegraph wires. This research would eventually result in the wireless technology used by ships on the ocean, a notable example being the distress signal used by the Titanic during its sinking in April of 1912. The idea of broadcasting sound over the air came from the theories of British scientist James Clerk Maxwell, who proposed a theory of electromagnetism in his 1873 book *Electricity and Magnetism*. Maxwell’s idea that electricity traveled in waves the same way as light was revolutionary, but unproven: “Many of his (Maxwell) readers simply did not have the grasp of advanced mathematics to understand his reasoning. Although Maxwell had proved his theories mathematically, he had not performed any practical experiments” (Coe 4). Heinrich Hertz would prove Maxwell’s theories in 1888, when Hertz “...demonstrated in laboratory experiments that indeed there was a form of electromagnetic radiation and that it was different from anything hitherto known” (Coe 4). These discoveries eventually led to the work of Guglielmo Marconi, who created a working wireless telegraphy set in 1894 based on Hertz’s experiments. Marconi’s initial machines did little more than broadcast the beeps of a telegraph, but the impact was profound. Marconi’s initial model, with

various improvements, set the stage for the transmission of sound: “When radio technology progressed from Morse code to voice transmission, the stage was set for one of the greatest national crazes ever to hit the United States” (Coe 26).

The initial broadcasts of sound were primarily done by amateurs and experimental broadcasts. These initial workings were occurring throughout the world. The commercial age of radio in America dawned during the 1920 presidential elections, when a small radio operation in the hills of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, broadcast the returns of the election. The operation, which would receive the first commercial broadcast license and take the call letters KDKA, did not reach a huge audience, but the impact was profound: “Since people had to gather around radio receiving equipment to try to make out the far-from-clear sound, it was less than an optimal listening experience, but that night, that moment, marked the debut of broadcast” (Rudel 34). This led to a boom in the number of radio stations, and department stores began carrying commercial radio sets, but there was still hesitation. Many engineers were skeptical of the medium, and it was expected by many that the popularity of radio would fizzle out like many other fads had before it. Yet the medium continued to grow, with people utilizing radio in order to become better acquainted with culture, hear updates on news and weather, and listening to music. When government officials began embracing the medium as a way of reaching and unifying the public, the message was clear: “Radio, with its power to send sounds invisibly through walls, across rivers, and to anywhere there was a receiver, was magic, and gradually it was recognized that radio was more than a fad: The radio telephone had progressed from a hobby to a staple luxury” (Rudel 44).

Radio had an intimate relationship with the public that had not been seen before. Newspapers had provided information to the public, but they did not have the ability to bring people together in ways that radio did. Literacy was also still not standard across the country at this time, so the impact was significant: information and opinion could reach the public on a mass scale. The impact this could have on the general public was a bold step forward: “By the late 1930s radio’s radical critics periodically and grudgingly acknowledged that American radio might empower people in some small ways. A radio gradually proved its worth as a news organ over the decade, and particularly during crises in Europe, some critics of the mass-produced medium decided broadcasting did help keep listeners informed and involved in events – and therefore better able to participate in the political process” (Lenthall 50). Perhaps the most significant figure to help cement the public’s relationship with radio is Franklin D. Roosevelt. FDR took office at a time of national turmoil, with the Great Depression still gripping the country. Roosevelt needed a way to push his New Deal agenda to the masses, while also appealing to a country that was reeling from the times. This led to the developments of the famous “fireside chats” through which Roosevelt informed the public of the progress of policies to counter the Depression and on developments during the Second World War. Roosevelt’s use of radio also marked a change in times: “By embracing radio, Roosevelt became the first chief executive to free himself from the restraints imposed by the print medium. Through broadcasting, the president retained a far greater degree of control over his message” (Brown 11). Roosevelt’s chats also had an impact on broadcast structures and policies. The range of coverage of the chats was unprecedented: “Roosevelt’s ‘fireside chats’ were the only occasion in which all national and regional networks would drop prior

commitments and link together into ‘one huge chain,’ giving the president access to the largest audience ever assembled for a single speech” (Brown 14). Some raised concerns that with the president behind such a wide medium, the potential for abuse of powers and censorship were high. This led to the development of watchdog organizations such as the Federal Radio Commission and its more influential successor, the Federal Communications Commission. Despite the fact that during the early years of its existence Roosevelt was able to work his way around many laws to continue broadcasting to the public, the stage was set for the FCC to set regulatory laws that are still in play today, albeit with modifications over time. Decisions with the FCC also helped form protections of Freedom of Speech: “Freedom of speech can be maintained in radio only by insisting that every station shall serve every listener within its normal range, whether Democrat or Republican, conservative or radical, rich or poor, Catholic or Jew, city dweller or farmer. It can most quickly be destroyed by assigning facilities to a favored few among the groups which seek to appeal to a specific and limited audience” (Benjamin 216).

Following World War II, television became the dominant and popular medium for news and entertainment in the home. Radio was no longer the source of the intimate relationship a politician or an entertainer could form with folks in their living rooms. This forced radio stations to reevaluate their business models and revamp their broadcasts. Recognizing that news and information were no longer the viable focus with the public transfixed on visuals, many stations began to embrace music as their main draw. This reinvention was significant for many stations to survive: “Local radio operators set about to create a new image and find new niches. Without network programming, most local stations could not afford to underwrite large variety shows or dramas, so they turned

instead to prerecorded music with live personalities as hosts. The industry also decided to settle its long-standing feud with the recording business to the mutual benefit of each” (Pease 12). This led to the rise of Top 40 radio, and the launch of a business model that would provide success for acts such as Elvis Presley and The Beatles. This model, while undergoing some changes with technology and the specialization of many stations to a particular genre, continues on today. While news updates are still featured on most broadcasts, and some stations still utilize news as their focus, music is still the main draw for audiences to radio. Even in the twenty-first century, radio’s place is still valuable: “While the technologies of radio transmission have undergone some dramatic changes, and we have largely moved from analogue to digital, the uses and roles of mediated audio in domestic spaces remain strikingly consistent” (Bessire 236). Radio’s relationship with the public has certainly changed, but its place in society still appears to be secure.

As radio began to take a significant place in American households, broadcast companies began to experiment with methods of entertaining the public at home. Music broadcasts had a place at occasional hours, but a desire for more significant programming was apparent. This led to the development of radio serials in the 1930s. Shows such as *The Jack Benny Program*, *Amos ‘n’ Andy*, and *My Little Margie* captivated audiences on a weekly basis. The intimate nature of a radio broadcast benefited programmers, and stars were born from these early broadcasts: “One of the reasons radio shows stayed on the air so long was the listeners’ imagination. Unlike television, the audience didn’t get tired of the same old faces. Nor did favorite characters outgrow their parts” (Mott 5). This sentiment carries into the niche radio series programming today; Guy Noir is still a fan favorite on *A Prairie Home Companion*. More fleshed out radio programs, the radio



drama, saw their mainstream breakthrough with Orson Welles' broadcast of *The War of the Worlds*. This success proved the radio medium was viable, and the interest of writers such as Samuel Beckett was caught. The challenge of writing for the radio also intrigued some writers: "An imaginative writer can build up a scene by subtle and ingenious word pictures, and for an imaginative listener, he can create illusions infinitely more romantic than the tawdry grottos of the stage" (Rodger 23). The atmosphere of a radio play proved popular; sound designers created the scene with their effects while writers carried the story, a challenge many were able to accept successfully. The challenge required specific focuses: "In general, the only mental images that a radio play is guaranteed to conjure up are those that depict the broad actions implicit in the dialogue" (Guralnick 22). The radio play is no longer the marquee draw it once was, but niche audiences are still big fans of the medium for storytelling excellence.

In short, radio has maintained an important relationship with listeners for almost a century. The technological advancements in the medium allowed for communications over long ranges, which eventually led to the medium's service for news and information. Franklin D. Roosevelt set the standard for relationships with the public through his use of radio to reach the public. The rise of television forced radio's main draw to shift into music, but the medium is still used for accessing information as well as other entertainment values. Radio may not be the premier force it once was, but its place in the public perception is still strong.

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### Annotated Bibliography

Benjamin, Louise M. *Freedom of the Air and the Public Interest: First Amendment*

*Rights in Broadcasting to 1935*. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois UP, 2001. Print.

Benjamin's book examines the early developments of Freedom of Speech arguments during the 1920s and early 1930s when radio was first beginning to develop. The book provides this project with background on what radio was providing for audiences during its early days, and provides a contrast to how broadcast laws are used today.

Bessire, Lucas, and Daniel Fisher, eds. *Radio Fields: Anthropology and Wireless Sound*

*in the 21st Century*. New York: New York UP, 2012. Print.

This book examines how radio is used in different parts of the world, and how technology that was invented more than a century ago continues to impact audiences today. The book provides an interesting perspective on the way radio can be used to share ideas and influence readers. Radio continues to provide communication technology in a cheap and durable way.

Brown, Robert J. *Manipulating The Ether: The Power of Broadcast Radio in Thirties*

*America*. London: McFarland &, 1998. Print.

Brown's book explores the influence and importance of radio during the 1930s.

The book explores how different people used radio to their advantage, such as

Roosevelt reaching the nation through the Fireside Chats or (more related to this project) Orson Welles' use of radio for entertainment purposes such as *The War of the Worlds*. Instances such as these are some of the defining moments in the success of radio, and that impact is still seen today.

Coe, Lewis. *Wireless Radio: A Brief History*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 1996. Print.

This book provides a look at the early origins of radio and explores the different applications radio technology is used for. It provides background information on the medium, while also reflecting on how far the technology has come today.

Cox, Jim. *The Great Radio Sitcoms*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2007. Print.

Cox's book is a collection of information on various radio programs that were popular during radio's golden age. The book also provides analysis and commentary on what made different shows successful and each show's style of comedy. The book is interesting for this project; obviously audiences are looking for different things with entertainment today, but the book shows that many of the same themes and styles that the older shows utilized are still seen today.

Guralnick, Elissa S. *Sight Unseen: Beckett, Pinter, Stoppard, and Other Contemporary Dramatists on Radio*. Athens: Ohio UP, 1996. Print.

This book fits well in comparison to *The Great Radio Sitcoms*, as it reflects on what makes more modern radio dramas successful. The book also talks about what radio dramas do to match the medium of radio in a way that requires a unique product, rather than just finding a play and reading it directly on the air.

Lenthall, Bruce. *Radio's America: The Great Depression and the Rise of Modern Mass Culture*. Chicago: University of Chicago, 2007. Print.

Lenthall's book examines how radio first established its lasting relationship with the public during the 1930s. The book also reflects on how radio continues to maintain an important relationship with the public despite many becoming alienated with broadcast over the years. The relationship with the public and the storytelling capabilities of radio that this book argues for were important for the inspiration of this project.

Mott, Robert L. *Radio Sound Effects: Who Did It, and How, In the Era of Live Broadcasting*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 1993. Print.

This book examines the sound effects of early radio productions and the people that created them. The book also talks about how the work of these sound creators played a major role in making radio entertainment a successful and endearing medium. While this project will not be using live sound, it is still an important part of the history of radio to examine.

Pease, Edward C., and Everette E. Dennis. *Radio: The Forgotten Medium*. New Brunswick, NJ, U.S.A.: Transaction, 1995. Print.

This book examines the role radio continues to play in society as well as the impact it can still have on audiences. The modern role of radio is an interesting one, and the book does a good job of not only looking at that modern role but also at how radio's history impacts the future of the medium.

Rodger, Ian. *Radio Drama*. London: Macmillan, 1982. Print.

This book examines what qualities make radio dramas successful, as well as looking at the history of radio dramas and what advances have helped the

medium. The book is also interesting in regards to this project as it looks at the relationship between radio drama and conventional theatre.

Rudel, Anthony. *Hello, Everybody! The Dawn of American Radio*. Orlando, FL: Harcourt, 2008. Print.

Rudel's book looks at the early success of radio in America, and what was behind that success. There was boom in the popularity of and use of radio as the medium became more widely accessible. That accessibility is still there today, but the audience is looking for different things now.

# Reflection

A.J. Brammer

Dr. Tyler Smith

Honors 499 – *Speed Date*

25 April 2014

### A Final Reflection on *Speed Date*

Considering there was a moment in time where it looked like this idea for a radio play wasn't going to even happen, I can say this project was an absolute delight to work on. From the early developments on finding a script and working through the sound design through the ultimate run of the show, the fact that we were able to capture a fun story and successfully share it with others through what has become something of an unconventional medium is something I take a certain amount of pride in. I genuinely hope to have the opportunity to do it again – if I get that opportunity, however, there are a few things I would like to take from this experience and remember for next time. We can always look to improve our craft in anything we do, so having something to build off of is always nice. In particular, the biggest takeaways from working on *Speed Date* for me are to find a subject material that is fun to work with, ensure that the people you surround yourself with are positive additions to the project, and always strive to go one step beyond.

The initial topic of my radio play was going to be significantly heavier than love and little things. When you set out to do a play involving politics and historical figures, you have to be up to the task. In many ways I am grateful that *Zombie F. Kennedy* fell through, because although I will always have a passion for history and politics, it's something I'm just not that into at the moment. Therefore, when taking on a new work, it

is important that the subject material is something you want to talk about. As something of a hopeless romantic, love is a fun issue to address. The material was something I did not dread working on; I did not open up the script each day and regret taking it up. I'm a little fearful in retrospect that taking on the *ZFK* project would not have been nearly as fun; there were issues we would have had to address that I've not completely formed my own opinions on, and the end result could have been some awkward conversations when ideals clashed. *ZFK* was also incredibly ambitious, and coming out of the gate producing my first work was already a tall order. The plan was laid out, but executing it would have been difficult, even if things had come together the way we originally planned. I'm glad we have an idea for *ZFK*, even if now is not the right time for it.

Granted, I do not always plan to take on something as "light" as love each time, but at the core of the piece there is something interesting to talk about. If you are going to devote a significant part of your time to this, not to mention a significant part of your collegiate diploma, you have to enjoy what you are working on to not only have a good time but also turn in a quality product. *Speed Date* is a fun show; there are laughs throughout and the characters were fun to look at. The subject material is also something relevant at any age, but particularly to a college student: definitions of love. Like many, I've seen a few relationships come and go, romantic and otherwise, and this play was an opportunity to reflect upon those relationships and what they mean to me.

After four years of regular radio broadcasts, I came into this project more than ready to handle the on-air side of things. I have little to no experience, however, in playwriting and sound design, so I could not have managed this production on my own. When seeking others to come in on the project, it is important to remember whom you



are dealing with. Does this person have a good track record of working well with others, have a passion for their work, do well at meeting deadlines, and play bass in a metal core band? They'll probably make a great sound designer. Does this person have a reputation among your friends of blowing off responsibility, having a hard time keeping up on communication, and live in North Dakota? You may want to reconsider hiring them as your playwright. These are people you will see a lot of when working on the production, so it is important to surround yourself with people you know you can fall back on. This would not have turned out nearly as successful without the people I worked with. The opportunity to work with Justin basically fell into my lap, and it was a tremendous stroke of luck. Not only is Justin talented, he also collaborates so well and is always willing to give and receive notes it is an easy job working with him. I couldn't have asked for a better sound designer than Brandon. I have been lucky to know him since my first day of classes as a freshman, so to be able to receive his help in capping my collegiate career was a wonderful opportunity. The cast, a mixture of talents I knew through other people and my own friends, came together with great ease. Working with each and every one of them was a delight. Through collaborations with Justin, Brandon, and the cast, this project hit heights I never thought possible.

I remember going into my initial meeting to discuss my thesis idea, and being told that I shouldn't be afraid of scaling things back. It was all right to shoot for something smaller if it meant getting a quality product in. I completely understood what was being said at the time, but at the same time I admire the desire to keep making things better. Instead of doing a short series of segments for broadcast, we put together a full-length production, and it was tremendously exciting. When doing a project like this, I think it is

always important to keep pushing the bar higher. Obviously know your limits, but keep trying to out do what you last did. This time around we had a project with fully recorded sound; maybe next time we up the ante and shoot for live Foley. I'm happy with what became of this project, but I am proud of how far it came from its origins. That would not have happened if we did not attempt to raise the bar.

*Speed Date* also gave me the opportunity to do something I have never done before: direct. I can produce a show for radio or television and help other people with their vision, but to create something out of my own accord was both daunting and exhilarating. I was lucky to work with a range of people who had done shows plenty of times before; Brandon helped me run rehearsals based on his multiple experiences with other shows. The actors themselves were easy to work with, and I am grateful to have pairings in scenes that blended experiences (one scene featured a seasoned actor in Talley going up with a philosophy major in Ben). I feel like this show allowed them to bring their own talents to the table, and the radio angle gave me enough control to create the product I wanted. It was a good way to make a directorial debut.

In short, my experiences with *Speed Date* were some of the most memorable I've had in my academic career. I'll be happy to take the experiences I learned on this project and apply them down the road. It is important when taking on a project like this that the subject material is something you will have fun working with. When surrounding yourself with people you will be working on a significant project with, ensure that the people you are working with are up to the task. When developing a project like our radio play, remember to keep asking what can be done to improve the job. *Speed Date*, in my opinion, was a fantastic success, and I learned a great deal working on it. I hope to have

the opportunity to work on something of this nature again. Maybe someday, with some effort and some luck, we'll even get to tell the story of the 35<sup>th</sup> president's triumphant return during the zombie apocalypse. One can dream.

# Script

Speed Date

A Radio Play by

Justin Allen Pierce

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# Cue 1: Tag Music

1.

## ACT I:

### SCENE 1: MEETING

A loud buzzer is heard.

Cue 2: Buzzer

~~Ruffling is heard followed by something dropped.~~

Cue 3: Cofe

MIRANDA

Come on... Stupid-

JACK

You need some help with that?

MIRANDA

(Surprised.)

What? Oh, thanks.

JACK

No problem. I know how hard these banners are to hang up by yourself. The manager- Jordan- goes through these phases and there's always a new banner for each one. Last month it was Saturday morning poetry readings and I was the banner guy for that little project, so...

MIRANDA

If I didn't know better, I'd think they were hazing me or something.

JACK

Oh, no, I'm sure that's not it.

MIRANDA

Yeah?

JACK

I mean, not from lack of capability. These guys can be real jerks, I just don't think they're smart enough to know what hazing is.

Cue 7: Ruffling

1/2 after they  
laugh.

The two chuckle as JACK helps MIRANDA fasten the banner in place. Once it's fastened, they both look at the finished product for a moment before JACK turns to MIRANDA.

JACK

Alright, you all good?

(CONTINUED)

MIRANDA

Oh! Yeah, all good. Thanks, again, for the help. I spent more time on that than I really wanna mention.

JACK

(Chuckles.)

Well, it'll just be between you and me, then.

Awkward beat.

Alright, well I better go help open up shop.

MIRANDA

Right. Thanks again.

*Cue 9: Name tag drop*

~~Footsteps~~, followed by something dropped.

MIRANDA

Hey! I think you dropped this!

JACK turns back.

JACK

Oh, thanks! They go crazy around here when you don't have your name tag. You're a lifesaver.

MIRANDA

Oh, thanks. I mean, you're welcome.

(Beat.)

One of those.

JACK

(Smiling.)

Yeah, one of 'em.

(Turns to go.)

I'll see you later.

MIRANDA

Yeah, I'll see you

~~Footsteps off. Beat. A second set leave.~~

*Cue 11: Clock*

Clock ticks to signify time lapse.

SCENE 2: INTRODUCING

Sounds of a relatively full cafe.  
Footsteps on. boom, boom, of hand  
on mic. feedback.

*Cue 12: Large Cafe Ambience*

(CONTINUED)

*Cue 14: Mic feedback*



JORDAN

Oh, wow, there's a... A lot of you here. I really didn't expect so many, but... wow, yeah, that's awesome! OK! Well, uh- Hi, my name is Jordan. I'm the manager here at the Full Moon Cafe and I wanna welcome you all to our first ever Saturday morning Speed Date! *Cue 16: Scattered*

Scattered applause.

Now, we know that some of you are used to spending your Saturday mornings at The Blazay Cafe down on fourteenth and vine and we also know about the tragedy that just occurred there. Bankruptcy is never a good thing, it really isn't, and we give our hearts out to Jaden and Maria Blazay and hope that everything works out in their favor. We really do... BUT! We very much appreciate them letting us step in and let you all get on with the dating! In fact, we appreciate it so much that out of all the money that we make here today, a small percentage is gonna go to helping them! So spend, spend, spend, and help out a good cause! *Cue 18: Scattered*

Scattered applause. *applause*

Alright, so just a few rules. Now, I love the way that the Blazays ran things there, I really, really did and I don't want to step on any toes... But what's the fun of moving you around if you don't change things up a bit, am I right?

Silence.

Right, well... The whole talk for two minutes and switch partners thing isn't really gonna work here. Now, I don't know about you guys and gals, but if I'm meeting someone for the first time and I'm expected to go on a "date" with them, by golly it better be a real date. Therefore, the dates are not gonna be two minutes. They're now gonna be- drum roll please-

Beat. Hand on knees drum roll from the wings.

Thank you, Jack- ten minutes!

Beat.

That's right! Your dates today are gonna be ten whole minutes long! Yay... am I right?

Silence.

We really want you to get to know one another. Really... start a community and get you all as comfortable with each other as you can be. Really get in tune with each other. So go ahead, share your stories, your feelings, whatever it is that you think the other person should know about you, you tell 'em! But make sure and get it all out in ten minutes. We don't want any ramblers, now do we?

Silence.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)



JORDAN (cont'd)

Right... Now at the beginning and ending of each session, you're gonna hear something that sounds a lot like this- *Cue 20: Buzzer*

A loud buzzer is heard.

- so when you hear that, get a move on to the next partner, get situated, and wait for the next date to start! Alright? Now, let's go ahead and get this thing started! You all have a wonderful day! May the matches be over in your favor!

*Cue 22: Scattered*Scattered applause. ~~Footsteps off.~~SCENE 3: WANTING

tick tick as time passes.

*Cue 24: Clock Ticking*

A loud buzzer is heard.

*Cue 26: Cafe*

Cafe noises, added to the noises are cell phone button noises as Mary types on her phone. ~~Footsteps enter and stop.~~

JOSH

OK, no. Can't do this.

~~Footsteps start to head off until -~~

MARY

Oh my g- hi! Josh! Josh- uh- Jane's Josh, right?

JOSH

(Feigning excitement.)

Hey. Yeah, Jane's Josh.

You're... Mary?

MARY

Yeah, Mary Grisswold. We met at Jane's birthday party last year- god, was that a year ago? Go ahead, sit down! It's good to see a vaguely familiar face!

JOSH

Oh, sure.

Sound of sitting and clinking of glasses onto table.

*Cue 28: Glass sitting*

~~I brought you a drink.~~ I don't know what you would want, but I asked the waitress and she said that you'd been drinking tea, so-

(CONTINUED)

MARY

Oh, thank you! That's really sweet of you.

JOSH

You're welcome.

But, yeah, Jane's party- that was a while ago... I remember you took off your shirt, drew an American flag on your stomach, and ran down the street screaming, "the redcoats are coming!"

MARY

Oh... you remember that. Yeah, that was- that was a thing that I did.

JOSH

Yeah.

MARY

I think that was right before I punched Jim Maddley in the face.

JOSH

Oh my god, yeah! I remember that! What was that about, anyway?

MARY

(Thinking.)

I think he lied to me or something?

Beat.

JOSH

He lied to you?

MARY

(Remembering.)

Yeah, I'm pretty sure he did. Yeah. Jane had calmed me down and had gotten my shirt back on- thankfully- and Jim and I just somehow ended up talking in the kitchen about something stupid like the Alamo- or something... and then he lied to me so, yeah, I punched him.

JOSH stares at her for a moment,  
with a smirk.

JOSH

(Disbelieving.)

Jim Maddley lied to you about The Alamo and so you punched him in the face?

MARY

Yeah.

(CONTINUED)

JOSH

You just... You just punched him.

MARY

Oh, god.

I mean, I didn't *just*- It's not like he didn't- I sound like a basket case don't I?

JOSH

I wouldn't say *that*-

MARY

In my defense, I was heavily, heavily intoxicated and I really don't like liars...

JOSH

That's... passionate.

MARY

I've been told I can be pretty passionate.

JOSH

Sounds like it.

Not in a bad way. And I'm not- I didn't judge you or anything. Because of the redcoats thing. It was funny. Everyone at the party thought it was funny. I mean, there was this one guy, but Jane told him off. But yeah, everyone else thought it was funny, so...

MARY

Funny?

JOSH

Yeah, funny.

MARY

Huh, funny.

JOSH

Yeah...

Beat.

MARY

It's crazy how these things are ten minutes a piece, huh?

JOSH

I'm sorry, these what?

MARY

These dates. Or is that even what they call 'em? I really don't even know. This is my first time and nothing is what I thought it was gonna be. I had this completely different

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MARY (cont'd)  
image- One long table, a big buffet of desperate singles...  
But it's actually pretty quaint. It's nice.

Beat.

JOSH  
I'm sorry, did you say dates?

MARY  
Yeah, dates.

JOSH  
Wha- I don't quite follow.

MARY  
You're not here for the speed dating thing? Saturday morning? Eleven a.m.? You know, "Be there or be alone for the rest of your life?" That's how they scared me into it, at least.

JOSH  
What? Oh... uh- no.

MARY  
Oh, god, you're not? I mean, this is the first time they've done it here, so I can see how you... But you bought me a drink and-

JOSH  
I just got here a few minutes ago. I come here a lot, but I've never seen you here. And then I saw you, alone, and I was just going to, you know-

MARY  
Just talk to me?

JOSH  
Yeah. Say hi. See how you've been.

Beat.

MARY  
I am so sorry, I thought you were a part of the whole-

JOSH  
No, I always come here on Saturdays. It's kind of my unofficial studio. I hang out here and work.

MARY  
You work at the... cafe?

(CONTINUED)

JOSH

What- oh, no! No, I write. I don't know if you'd call that work exactly, but-

MARY

Oh my god, yeah! I remember hearing that you were writing. That you wrote. For a living. As a job.

(Beat.)

God, I don't even know how to say it.

JOSH

I usually stick with "writer."

MARY

Of course! Sorry. I can't believe I couldn't even- but a writer! That's so cool! I'd heard you got published, right? A short story or something? And then I'd heard you'd gotten a few job offers, right?

(Beat.)

I'm not completely making that up, am I?

JOSH

(Affected.)

No, you aren't. I just- yeah, that happened.

MARY

That's exciting, Josh! So, where are you at now?

JOSH

um- nowhere, really. Like I said, here mostly.

Beat.

MARY

Did you not-?

JOSH

I could've taken a few jobs, yeah. But I just... Didn't, I guess. I don't know. I mean, I have a decent job at Brady's Bar downtown, so that's nice. And I write for the local paper. I have a column that people seem to enjoy: "Josh's Joshes": I kind of take pop culture references and make fun of 'em... It's like... I don't know, it's stupid.

MARY

No, that doesn't sound stupid. It's really cool.

JOSH

Yeah?

MARY

Yeah.

(CONTINUED)

Beat.

JOSH

(Begins to look around.)

Look, should I, I don't know, should I leave you alone and let you get to your next date or something? I'm becoming increasingly aware that the guy in black over there is giving me the "I swear I'm going to kill you" eyes.

MARY

What? Oh, no. He was my third date. Real creep. Invited me over to his place for a nightcap.

JOSH

It's not even noon.

MARY

Thank you! That's what I said!  
But no, don't go. It's not as bad as I thought it'd be, but I still don't think I'm ready for this whole "experience." Besides, the whole concept behind these things seems to be lying to each other, trying to make yourself seem better than you really are. And I-

JOSH

- hate liars.

MARY

You got it.

Beat.

Look, I really hope you don't think bad of me because of- because I'm trying this out.

JOSH

What? No, I wouldn't-

MARY

I know this looks so... Jane told me I shouldn't come and I should've listened.

Beat.

JOSH

You still keep in contact with her? Jane?

MARY

Oh. Yeah, we email a lot. Keep in touch. New age pen pals, that sort of thing.

JOSH

(Trying to be "cool" about it.)

Cool, very cool.

(CONTINUED)

MARY  
Do you not?

JOSH  
Not what?

MARY  
Keep in touch. With Jane.

JOSH  
Oh. No. Not for a while.

MARY  
Did something happen? You guys were so close.

JOSH  
She- she didn't tell you?

MARY  
No. She never really talked about you a lot.  
(Realizes this has affected JOSH.)  
Oh, not, like, in a bad way, or anything. I mean, she told me that you two weren't together anymore, she just didn't say much else. And then I knew that you still hung around each other after.

JOSH  
I guess that's just the problem with having all of the same friends. You get trapped in the same circle and things just get weird.

MARY  
Ah.

JOSH  
Yeah.

MARY  
Yeah...

Beat.

JOSH  
How is she, anyways?

MARY  
Jane? She's fine, I think. Life in Paris seems to be agreeing with her.

JOSH  
Oh, right! Yeah. She moved. Up and moved to Paris.

(CONTINUED)



MARY

Yep.

JOSH

With talks of becoming an artist.

MARY

"The greatest artist that ever lived," I believe the declaration was.

JOSH

Yeah.

They chuckle.

MARY

Well, I guess if you're gonna go for something, you should go all the way. Chase your dreams and all that, right?

JOSH is hit hard by this and immediately diverts his gaze.

JOSH

No, yeah, definitely.

MARY

You know what? ~~She actually-~~*cue 30s cell phone*

Phone button sounds.

She texted me a picture the other day. I don't know if I actually saved it or not, but if I did- here it is!

Ruffling as she hands him her phone?

She seems happy.

JOSH

Wow. Wow, yeah, she does. Looks great. Super great. Yeah, just great.

Ruffling as he hands it back.

(Affected.)

Who's he?

MARY

Who?

JOSH

The man. The one standing beside her.

MARY

Oh, Marco?

(CONTINUED)